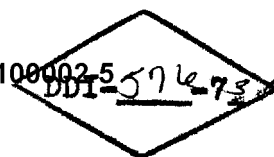


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S E C R E T

5 March 1973

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Reflections on the Soviet Strategic Paper

1. Intelligence people take it as part of their job to put themselves into the position of--if possible to think themselves into the minds of--foreign leaders. They think this is the best way to approach the tasks of understanding and predicting. God knows they often fail, but they know no better way.

2. Not only their failures get them into trouble. They try to express the aspirations and problems of foreign leaders as these gentlemen themselves perceive them. Naturally, these gentlemen do not perceive their own aspirations as being wicked, and, being foreigners, they often perceive the US as being a source of their problems. And the intelligence analysis reads accordingly.

3. The trouble is that very few intelligence people manage to find ways to express foreign perceptions without ending up sounding sympathetic to their aspirations and problems. Their prose is thus fair game for attack by those who are concentrating on the implications of a given problem for US interests. It gets more embarrassing for the intelligence officer when he admits, as he often must, that the implications for US policy are not much affected by the foreign perceptions he has labored to analyze. Nevertheless, that's his professional contribution, and he feels compelled to make it. A round analysis, he tells himself, is better than a flat one even if both come out at the same place.

4. What has all this got to do with the Soviet strategic paper?

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S E C R E T

5. Most people who have seriously tried to think their way into Soviet perceptions of their own strategic problems have been impressed by the influence of US programs. Many specialists believe that quite a few specific Soviet programs can be explained, in timing and characteristics, as responses to or imitations of US programs. Be that as it may, in a more general sense these analysts tend to place the pressures exerted by the totality of US programs near the center of their interpretations. They give considerable weight in terms of the past, to the USSR's need to catch up with the US and, in terms of the future, to its need to maintain vigorous programs just in order to keep up in the face of US programs which, if not pace-setting, are moving along at quite a clip.

6. The Soviet strategic paper is not innocent of these considerations. It recognizes a technological gap in the US favor, and at one point it dwells on Soviet respect for the US capacity to surge forward when stimulated. But it suggests at other points that the USSR is setting the pace, that Moscow thinks "strategic dominance" is a feasible goal, that it pursues the technological competition in search of a Sputnik-like breakthrough. There is an implication that the Soviets are the ones who so arranged matters as to leave R&D uncontrolled in the SAL agreements, and that their statements on "restraint" are only deception. The overall impression is that they are going all-out for strategic advantage, if not dominance, and cannot be deflected from this course.

7. Those giving more weight to the influence of US programs--the dynamics of the arms race, really--think maybe they can be deflected. They subscribe to all the paper's citations of dangers arising from various Soviet programs. But, since they think the Soviets are pushed along this course by their fears as well as pulled along by their ambitions, they would allow a somewhat greater chance than the paper suggests that the Soviets are seriously seeking agreement in SALT II, or can be led to do so.

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TRANSMITTAL SLIP		DATE
TO: <i>DDI A/DOI</i>		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	
REMARKS:		
<p><i>Rather than purge myself of the [ ] paper, I set down some temperate thoughts.</i></p> <p><i>I now understand that Duckett is organizing some further drafting on this subject.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- do you know anything about this?</i></li> <li><i>- do you still want me to try my hand at a re-write?</i></li> </ul>		
FROM: [ ]		
ROOM NO.	EXTENSION	

FORM NO. 241  
1 FEB 55REPLACES FORM 36-8  
WHICH MAY BE USED.

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MEMORANDUM FOR: EWP/PWW

Attached are OSR's comments on   
 memo to Kissinger on forces shaping  
Soviet R & D programs. OSR has no problems  
with the paper, considering its rather nar-  
row focus. Clarke proposes some minor changes  
if you intend to give it wider dissem. The  
IM route would seem preferable to other op-  
tions, e.g. a SNIE.

(DATE)

FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101  
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

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